

Recommended Guidelines for Utilizing Cryotherapy in Practice

1 Pre-Procedure Preparation

Goal: Minimize patient stress and create a calm, controlled environment.

- Conduct a thorough pre-exam using Fear Free handling techniques, including Gentle Control, Considerate Approach, and Touch Gradient.
- Allow time for acclimation to the environment before the procedure.
- Use calming pheromones, quiet exam spaces, and non-slip surfaces.
- Offer pre-visit pharmaceuticals when indicated, to maintain a patient FAS level <3.
- Sedation is recommended for subcutaneous cryotherapy or any procedure requiring prolonged immobility.
- For small topical lesions, sedation may be used at the practitioner's discretion. In all cases, Fear Free practitioners must proactively address any signs of pain or Fear, Anxiety, or Stress associated with either subcutaneous or topical cryotherapy through the judicious use of pre-visit pharmaceuticals, analgesics, and, when indicated, sedation
- Apply local lidocaine or topical anesthetic before probe insertion or contact, to help reduce post-procedural discomfort.
- Have comfort items ready (treats, mats, low-stress restraint aids) to aid in positioning and administration of sedatives.

2 During the Procedure

Goal: Maintain patient comfort, monitor pain, and minimize distress.

- Keep the procedure area quiet and well-organized.
- Use minimal, gentle restraint - ideally supported by a trained Fear Free Certified Technician or Assistant.
- Monitor vital signs and behavioral cues throughout: heart rate, respiration, posture, and vocalization.
- Use validated pain scales (Colorado State University, Glasgow Short-Form, or Feline Grimace Scale) throughout the procedure and post-procedure evaluations.
- Use verbal reassurance and gentle touch to maintain calm while administering sedation.
- Allow the clinician to palpate the iceball gently to avoid unnecessary pressure or damage to nearby tissue.



G-HO-019-EN-2601

Recommended Guidelines for Utilizing Cryotherapy in Practice

3 Post-Procedure Recovery

Goal: Ensure a smooth recovery and manage pain proactively.

- Create a recovery environment that reduces stress by ensuring the patient is on a warm, nonslip surface, in a quiet area, with the comfort of the owner and/or veterinary staff to help them awaken from sedation.
- Monitor patients closely until fully awake and stable.
- Dispense short-term analgesia (e.g., 3–5 days of carprofen or similar) to help reduce postprocedural discomfort.
- Provide owners with clear, reassuring home-care instructions.
- Limit activity for 24 hours; normal play can typically resume the next day.
- Reinforce that some scabbing, peeling, and tissue shrinkage over several weeks is normal.
- Schedule follow-up calls to check comfort and healing progress.
- Encourage owners to monitor for behavioral signs of pain or irritation and report promptly.

4 Client Communication

Goal: Reduce client anxiety and foster trust.

- Explain that cryotherapy is minimally invasive and often low-pain due to cold's analgesic effect.
- Describe what normal healing looks like and when to contact the clinic.
- Emphasize how the procedure aligns with Fear Free principles – less pain, less stress, faster recovery.
- Provide both the Pet Parent FAQ and a simplified Fear Free Recovery Guide with photos or diagrams.

5 Team Considerations

Goal: Maintain consistency and confidence across all staff.

- Review Kubanda Cryotherapy training materials and dosage guidelines.
- Assign roles (monitoring, comfort support, client communication).
- Debrief after each case to identify improvement areas.
- Celebrate positive outcomes and share patient success stories to reinforce Fear Free culture